

IT is fair to say I have not had the happiest or easiest of decades.

Over the past 11 years I have been in the News of the World on more than one occasion, and they have been as much of a driving force behind the Sarah's Law campaign as I have.

In fact they have helped a great deal more than I can say and I know it would have been a longer and harder fight without them in my corner.

But today, instead of them writing about me, I'd like to turn the tables and write about them and give you just a little insight of who is behind the banner.

We have all seen the news this week and the terrible things that have happened and I have no wish to sweep it under the carpet. Indeed there were rumours—which turned out to be untrue—that I and my fellow Phoenix charity chiefs had our phones hacked.

But today is a day to reflect, to look back and remember the passing of an old friend, the News of the World.

We did not meet under the best of circumstances. In fact, it was the worst, most horrendous time in my life. But from that moment on the News of the World and more importantly the people there became my very good and trusted friends.

VOICE

And like all good friends they have stuck with me through the good and the bad and helped me through both. It is for that reason I asked if I could write this piece today.

For some, the news that the paper is having its final edition today is a good thing and with what has been reported over the past few days it is not surprising that there is a feeling of disgust, a feeling I share at the behaviour of a few.

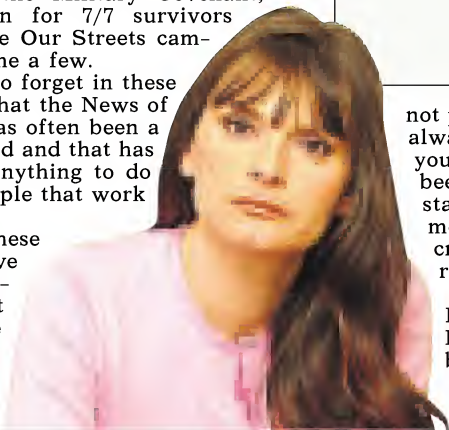
But there is and has been so much more to the paper and its people than these dark times. God only knows why the News of the World has stuck by me for so long and for that you'd have to ask them but the reason I have stayed with them is that they have always been a paper that cares and a voice for the people.

It has entertained us and informed us, exposed arms dealers, corrupt officials and dangerous criminals.

But more than that it has always tried to campaign on our behalf, its readers, on issues like the Military Covenant, compensation for 7/7 survivors and the Save Our Streets campaign to name a few.

It is easy to forget in these dark times that the News of the World has often been a force for good and that has more than anything to do with the people that work on it.

And it's these people I have come to respect and it is for these people I write this piece. I do



NEWS OF THE WORLD

proved it is a force for good

BY SARA PAYNE

not pretend that they are perfect or always got it right but I can tell you on a personal level there have been many times when they have stayed close and stood beside me—not for the headline or public credit but just because it was the right thing to do.

All the hours that Stuart Kuttner and my special friend Hayley Barlow sat beside my bed after my stroke, or dear

Bob Warren who was always there when I needed help. They came to both my parents' funerals to mourn, not to report.

I guess what I'm saying is that if the paper has to go, it's a sad day for me.

But the saddest thing of all is the great people I have come to know, trust and respect did no wrong.

They are not the guilty few and they have been as much a part of our Sundays as the roast over the years.

I shall miss you all and to you I say thank you and good luck.

Tribute... campaigner Sara



For Sarah...our battle for kids

SARAH'S LAW

By HAYLEY BARLOW

IT TOOK 10 long years to win one of our greatest battles—to protect children from paedophiles through Sarah's Law.

We joined forces with Sara Payne after her daughter Sarah was murdered by convicted child molester Roy Whiting in 2000.

We believed every parent should have the legal right to know if predatory paedophiles who might pose a risk to their children were living in the neighbourhood.

The campaign resulted in immediate action to tighten up the supervision of sex offenders, but it took a decade to properly protect our children.

We met strident opposition from some who put paedophiles' rights to privacy ahead of children's rights to safety.

And when law-makers wouldn't act, we Named and Shamed dangerous perverts, so parents knew if they lived nearby. Finally, a scheme to alert parents to dangerous child molesters—which has already saved at least 75 children—was rolled out across country.

The decision to introduce it nationally last year means every mother and father, carer and guardian will have the right to ask police if anyone with regular unsupervised access to their youngsters poses a risk to them.